

## Chapter 2: Documenting the Planning Process

### 2 Initiation

Documentation of the planning process, including public involvement, is required to meet FEMA's DMA 2000 (44CFR§201.4(c)(1) and §201.6(c)(1)). This section includes a description of the planning process used to develop this plan, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how all of the involved agencies participated.

#### 2.1.1 Description of the Planning Process

The Ada County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan was developed through a collaborative process involving all of the organizations and agencies detailed in Section 1.0 of this document. The County's local coordinator contacted these organizations directly to invite their participation and schedule meetings of the planning committee. The planning process included 5 distinct phases which were in some cases sequential (step 1 then step 2) and in some cases intermixed (step 4 completed though out the process):

1. **Collection of Data** about the extent and periodicity of wildfires in and around Ada County. This included an area encompassing Ada, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Owyhee, and Gem Counties to insure a robust dataset for making inferences about fires in Ada County specifically; this included a wildfire extent and ignition profile.
2. **Field Observations and Estimations** about wildfire risks including fuels assessments, juxtaposition of structures and infrastructure to wildland fuels, access, and potential treatments by trained wildfire specialists.
3. **Mapping** of data relevant to wildfire control and treatments, structures, resource values, infrastructure, fire prone landscapes, and related data.
4. **Facilitation of Public Involvement** from the formation of the planning committee, to a public mail survey, news releases, public meetings, public review of draft documents, and acceptance of the final plan by the signatory representatives.
5. **Analysis and Drafting of the Report** to integrate the results of the planning process, providing ample review and integration of committee and public input, followed by acceptance of the final document.

Planning efforts were led by the Project Director, Dr. William E. Schlosser, of Northwest Management, Inc. Dr. Schlosser holds 4 degrees in natural resource management (A.S. geology; B.S. forest and range management; M.S. natural resource economic & finance; Ph.D. environmental science and regional planning). Project Leader, Mr. Toby R. Brown, holds a B.S. degree in natural resource management. Together, they led a team of resource professionals that included fire mitigation specialists, wildfire control specialists, resource management professionals, and hazard mitigation experts.

They were the point-people for team members to share data and information with during the plan's development. They and the planning team met with many residents of the county during the inspections of communities, infrastructure, and hazard abatement assessments. This methodology, when coupled with the other approaches in this process, worked effectively to integrate a wide spectrum of observations and interpretations about the project.

The planning philosophy employed in this project included the open and free sharing of information with interested parties. Information from federal and state agencies was integrated

into the database of knowledge used in this project. Meetings with the committee were held throughout the planning process to facilitate a sharing of information between cooperators.

When the public meetings were held, many of the committee members were in attendance and shared their support and experiences with the planning process and their interpretations of the results.

### **2.1.2 Multi-Jurisdictional Participation**

CFR requirement §201.6(a)(3) calls for multi-jurisdictional planning in the development of Wildfire Mitigation Plans which impact multiple jurisdictions. This Wildfire Mitigation Plan is applicable to the following Jurisdictions:

- Ada County, Idaho
- City of Boise
- City of Kuna
- City of Eagle
- City of Meridian
- City of Star
- City of Garden City

All of these jurisdictions were represented on the planning committee, in public meetings, and participated in the development of hazard profiles, risk assessments, and mitigation measures. The planning committee meetings were the primary venue for authenticating the planning record. However, additional input was gathered from each jurisdiction in a combination of the following ways:

- Planning committee leadership visits to scheduled municipality public meeting (e.g., County Commission meetings, City Hall meetings) where planning updates were provided and information was exchanged.
- One-on-one visits between the planning committee leadership and the representatives of the municipality (e.g., meetings with County Commissioners, or City Councils in chambers).
- Special meetings at each jurisdiction by the planning committee leadership requested by the municipality involving elected officials (mayors and County Commissioners), appointed officials (e.g., County Assessor, Sheriff, City Police), municipality employees, local volunteers (e.g., fire district volunteers), business community representatives, and local citizenry.
- Written correspondence was provided between the planning committee leadership and each municipality updating the cooperators in the planning process, making requests for information, and facilitating feedback.

## **2.2 Public Involvement**

Public involvement in this plan was made a priority from the inception of the project. There were a number of ways that public involvement was sought and facilitated. In some cases this led to members of the public providing information and seeking an active role in protecting their own homes and businesses, while in other cases it led to the public becoming more aware of the process without becoming directly involved in the planning process.

## **2.2.1 News Releases**

Under the auspices of the Ada County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Planning Committee, news releases were submitted to area newspapers.

### **2.2.1.1 Newspaper Articles**

Committee and public meeting announcements were published in the local newspaper ahead of each meeting. The following is an example of one of the announcements that ran in the local newspaper.

#### **Hot Topic: Ada & Canyon Counties Plan to Mitigate Wildfire Risk**

The Ada & Canyon County Commissioners, working with the Southwest Idaho RC&D, have created a Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee to complete a Wildfire Mitigation Plan for Ada & Canyon Counties as part of the National Fire Plan authorized by Congress and the Whitehouse. The Ada & Canyon Counties Wildfire Mitigation Plans will include risk analysis at the community level with predictive models for where fires are likely to ignite and where they are likely to spread rapidly once ignited. Northwest Management, Inc. has been retained by Ada & Canyon Counties to provide wildfire risk assessments, mapping, field inspections, and interviews, and to collaborate with the committee to prepare the plan. The committee includes rural and wildland fire districts, land managers, elected officials, agency representatives, and others. Northwest Management specialists are conducting analyses of fire prone landscapes and making recommendations for potential treatments. Specific activities for homes, structures, infrastructure, and resource capabilities will be proposed as part of the analysis.

One of the most important steps in gathering information about fire risk in Ada & Canyon Counties is to conduct a homeowner's survey. Northwest Management, Inc., in cooperation with local fire officials, have mailed a brief survey to randomly selected homeowners in the county seeking details about home construction materials, proximity to water sources, and other risk factors surrounding homes. This survey is very important to the success of the plan. Those homes that receive a survey are asked to please take the time to complete it, thereby benefiting the community overall.

The planning team will be conducting Public Meetings to discuss preliminary findings and to seek public involvement in the planning process in August. A notice on the date and location of these meetings will be posted in local newspapers.

For more information on the Fire Mitigation Plan projects in Ada & Canyon Counties contact your County Commissioner, the Southwest Idaho RC&D office, John McGee, the Ada & canyon County local coordinator, at 208-573-0155 or William Schlosser at the Northwest Management, Inc. office in Moscow, Idaho at 208-883-4488.

## **2.2.2 Public Mail Survey**

In order to collect a broad base of perceptions about wildland fire and individual risk factors of homeowners in Ada County, a mail survey was conducted. Using a state and county database of landowners in Ada County, homeowners from the Wildland-Urban Interface surrounding each community were identified. In order to be included in the database, individuals were selected that own property and have a dwelling in Ada County, as well as a mailing address in Ada County. This database created a list of 65,478 unique names to which were affixed a random

number that contributed to the probability of being selected for the public mail survey. A total of 237 landowners meeting the above criteria were selected.

The public mail survey developed for this project has been used in the past by Northwest Management, Inc., during the execution of other WUI Wildfire Mitigation Plans. The survey used The Total Design Method (Dillman 1978) as a model to schedule the timing and content of letters sent to the selected recipients. Copies of each cover letter, mail survey, and communication are included in Appendix IV.

The first in the series of mailing was sent June 25, 2004, and included a cover letter, a survey, and an offer of receiving a custom GIS map of the area of their selection in Ada County if they would complete and return the survey. The free map incentive was tied into assisting their community and helping their interests by participating in this process. Each letter also informed residents about the planning process. A return self-addressed envelope was included in each packet. A postcard reminder was sent to the non-respondents on July 9, 2004, encouraging their response. A final mailing, with a revised cover letter pleading with them to participate, was sent to non-respondents on July 16, 2004.

Surveys were returned during the months of July, August, September, October and November. A total of 66 residents responded to the survey. No surveys were returned as undeliverable. The effective response rate for this survey was 28%. Statistically, this response rate allows the interpretation of all of the response variables significantly at the 90% confidence level.

### **2.2.2.1 Survey Results**

A summary of the survey's results will be presented here and then referred back to during the ensuing discussions on the need for various treatments, education, and other information.

All of the respondents to the survey have a home in Ada County, and 92% consider this their primary residence. About 34% of the respondents were from the Eagle area, 34% were from the Meridian area, 13% were from the Boise area, 11% from Star, and 8% from Garden City.

All of the respondents correctly identified that they have emergency telephone 911 services in their area. Their ability to correctly identify if they are covered by a fire district was 69%. Respondents were asked to identify if their home is protected by a fire district. Nearly all of the county's residents in the populated areas have a fire protection district. Of the respondents, 31% responded they do not have a fire district covering their home, when in fact they do. None of the respondents indicated that they were inside of a fire protection district when in reality they are outside of a protection district.

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of roofing material covering the main structure of their home. Approximately 86% of respondents indicated their homes were covered with a composite material (asphalt shingles). About 5% indicated their homes were covered with a metal (e.g., aluminum, tin) roofing material. Roughly 3% of the respondents indicated they have a wooden roofing material such as shakes or shingles. The additional 3% of respondents had a variety of combustible and non-combustible materials indicated.

Residents were asked to evaluate the proximity of trees within certain distances of their homes. Often, the density of trees around a home is an indicator of increased fire risk. The results are presented in Table 2.1

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**Table 2.1 Survey responses indicating the proximity of trees to homes.**

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<b>Number of Trees</b>	<b>Within 250 feet of your home</b>	<b>Within 75 feet of your home</b>
None	3%	6%
Less than 10	41%	59%
Between 10 and 25	32%	27%
More than 25	24%	8%

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Approximately 97% of those returning the survey indicated they have a lawn surrounding their home. Of these individual home sites, 100% indicated they keep this lawn green through the fire season.

The average driveway length of the respondents was approximately 105 feet long, from their main road to their parking area. Only one of the respondents had a driveway over ¼ miles long. Approximately 74% of all homeowners indicated they have an alternative escape route, with the remaining 26% indicating only one-way-in and one-way-out.

Respondents were asked to indicate any tools they had at or near their home that could be used in fighting a wildland fire. Table 2.2 summarizes the results.

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**Table 2.2 Tool Availability At or Near Homes.**

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Hand Tools	89%
Portable Water Tank	8%
Stationary Water Tank	6%
Pond, Lake, or Stream Water Supply	23%
Water Pump and Fire Hose	9%
Equipment Suitable for Constructing Fire Breaks	6%

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Roughly 14% of the respondents in Ada County indicated they have someone in their household trained in wildland fire fighting. Approximately 12% indicated someone in the household had been trained in structural fire fighting. However, it is important to note that these questions did not specify a standard nor did it refer to how long ago the training was received. Respondents were asked if they conducted any type of periodic fuels reduction program near their home site such as grass or brush burning, 25% indicated they did. 14% also indicated that they graze livestock around their homes.

Respondents were asked to complete a fuel hazard rating worksheet to assess their home's fire risk rating. An additional column titled "results" has been added to the table, showing the percent of respondents circling each rating (Table 2.3).

Circle the ratings in each category that best describes your home.

Table 2.3. Fuel Hazard Rating Worksheet		Rating	Results
<b>Fuel Hazard</b>	Small, light fuels (grasses, forbs, weeds, shrubs)	1	65%
	Medium size fuels (brush, large shrubs, small trees)	2	31%
	Heavy, large fuels (woodlands, timber, heavy brush)	3	5%
<b>Slope Hazard</b>	Mild slopes (0-5%)	1	89%
	Moderate slope (6-20%)	2	7%
	Steep Slopes (21-40%)	3	2%
	Extreme slopes (41% and greater)	4	3%
<b>Structure Hazard</b>	Noncombustible roof and noncombustible siding materials	1	50%
	Noncombustible roof and combustible siding material	3	0%
	Combustible roof and noncombustible siding material	7	50%
	Combustible roof and combustible siding materials	10	0%
<b>Additional Factors</b>	Rough topography that contains several steep canyons or ridges	+2	Average -2.4 pts
	Areas having history of higher than average fire occurrence	+3	
	Areas exposed to severe fire weather and strong winds	+4	
	Areas with existing fuel modifications or usable fire breaks	-3	
	Areas with local facilities (water systems, local fire districts, dozers)	-3	

#### Calculating your risk

Values below are the average response value to each question.

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \text{Fuel hazard} & \underline{1.4} & \times \text{Slope Hazard } \underline{1.2} = \underline{1.7} \\
 \text{Structural hazard} & + & \underline{3.5} \\
 \text{Additional factors (+ or -)} & & \underline{-2.4} \\
 \text{Total Hazard Points} & = & \underline{2.8}
 \end{array}$$

**Table 2.4. Percent of respondents in each risk category as determined by the survey respondents.**

00% – Extreme Risk = 26 + points
00% – High Risk = 16–25 points
15% – Moderate Risk = 6–15 points
85% – Low Risk = 6 or less points

Maximum household rating form score was 15 points, as assessed by the homeowners. These numbers were compared to observations made by field crews trained in wildland fire fighting. These results indicate that for the most part, these indications are only slightly lower than the risk rating assigned by the “professionals”. Anecdotal evidence would indicate that Ada County

landowners involved in this survey have a more realistic view of wildfire risk than the landowners in other Idaho counties where these questions have been asked.

Finally, respondents were asked “if offered in your area, would members of your household attend a free, or low cost, one-day training seminar designed to teach homeowners in the wildland–urban interface how to improve the defensible space surrounding your home and adjacent outbuildings?” 42% of the respondents indicated a desire to participate in this type of training.

Homeowners were also asked, “How do you feel Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Mitigation projects should be funded in the areas surrounding homes, communities, and infrastructure such as power lines and major roads?” Responses are summarized in Table 2.5.

**Table 2.5. Public Opinion of Wildfire Mitigation Funding Preferences.**

	Mark the box that best applies to your preference		
	100% Public Funding	Cost-Share (Public & Private)	Privately Funded (Owner or Company)
<b>Home Defensibility Projects</b>	12%	46%	42%
<b>Community Defensibility Projects</b>	40%	50%	10%
<b>Infrastructure Projects Roads, Bridges, Power Lines, Etc.</b>	74%	18%	9%

### 2.2.3 Committee Meetings

The following list of people who participated in the planning committee meetings, volunteered time, or responded to elements of the Ada County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan’s preparation.

- Bart Hamilton .....Ada County Sheriffs Office
- Bill Baker .....Ada County EMS
- Bill Moore .....Southwest Idaho RC&D
- Bruce Eggleston.....Boise Planning Department
- Bruce Rankin.....Boise Fire
- Dave Hanneman .....Boise Fire
- Doug Hardman.....Ada County Emergency Management
- Doug Rosin .....Kuna Fire District
- George Webb.....Boise Fire Department
- Greg Borak.....Idaho Fish and Game
- Jerry Scholten .....Idaho Fish and Game
- John Barclay .....Ada County Communications
- John McGee.....Northwest Management, Inc.
- Jonathan Perry.....Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
- Kenny W. Bowers.....Meridian Fire Department
- Kevin Ron.....Boise City Fire Department
- Martin Knoelk .....North Ada County Fire and Rescue
- Melodie Holstead .....City of Kuna
- Ray Carino .....Ada County Emergency Management
- Ron Amendus .....North Ada County Fire and Rescue
- Steve Hamilton.....Boise Fire Department
- Toby Brown .....Northwest Management, Inc.

- Tracy Raymon .....Boise Fire Department
- William Schlosser.....Northwest Management, Inc.

Committee Meetings were scheduled and held on the following dates:

### **2.2.3.1 June 1, 2004**

#### **Miscellaneous Business –**

Send out electronic copies of assessments to e-mail list. Not very many people have seen them. Wayne Forrey should have detailed list of participants. NMI needs to obtain this list to insure that everyone is receiving materials.

Sheldon Bluestein is contact for obtaining repeater locations and County GIS materials.

The next Fire Chiefs Association meetings are 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. of each month. NMI needs to attend one of these meetings to get fire depts. to participate and share info.

Committee would like city council involved in adoption process. We need to get on agenda ASAP.

Need to include narration of foothills situation in final document.

#### **Old Business –**

Resources and Capability surveys have been circulated to most departments; however, Meridian Fire is the only one that has returned the completed form to NMI. We also need to make sure that everyone has received a copy. Doug Hardman made copies and gave them to some, but many departments have not the survey because they were not at the last meeting.

NMI has obtained cadastral data; however, Doug Hardman wants to make sure that we are using the most recent and accurate data. He would be a good contact person to make sure we have this information.

#### **Discussion –**

*Resource & Capability Enhancements: (Boise Fire was only dept. in attendance)*

- Need more brush fire apparatus and tenders
- Most dept. are not volunteer so they are usually well staffed and they have adequate access to training
- Roads – many one ways and cul-de-sacs in subdivisions – need more off road access points or constructed loop roads
- Some depts. contract with BLM, which may take some resources out of the county during the wildfire season
- Foothills Levy – 800 acres purchased by city in foothills (will exacerbate the problem)
- Do not have more stations planned in foothills at this time. 1000's of new homes will be added in near future.
- The area south of town towards Kuna experiences 3x more fires than northern foothills area. City is working on annexing some of this area to alleviate dead spot problem.
- Planning and Zoning is a very touchy subject in Ada County, but some feel that they need to come up with some type of formal ranking system to prioritize higher risk or more valuable resource areas
- Communication – have aligned radio frequencies with BLM, which was a major improvement, but personnel needs more training on use of proper frequencies. Also,



areas on the very eastern edge of the county cannot communicate with dispatch in town. May need to install an additional repeater or sub-repeater in Stage Stop area.

- Building Codes – so far no one has been successful with curbing high risk housing designs (shake roofs, siding, etc.) or mandating defensible space. FIREWISE program was unsuccessful. Fireworks are a big problem, but so far there has been little success in enforcing city ordinances restricting their use. Education tactics have been the most successful in getting homeowners to create defensible spaces, fire resistant landscaping, etc.
- Boise City Foothills Policy Plan – may be an avenue to getting new wildfire related ordinances in place
- Recreation – Greenbelt Reservoir experiences a lot of small fires. Officials hire people during the fire season to patrol the area on 4-wheelers with water tanks. This quick response tactic works pretty well plus it's a good way to educate people in the area about preventing wildfires. Fuel reduction projects would also be beneficial in this area.

#### *Potential Mitigation Projects:*

- Roads – need more thru roads and off road access to rear of homes (may be environmental issues associated)
- Water Resources – city limits area has plenty of water access. Departments have established dip sites and have port-a-tank set up locations. Whitney District is short on water due to a lack of hydrants. The city stations a tender in this area to aid this dept.
- Fire Districts – West side of county is covered; however, there is no fire district covering the far eastern edges of the county. Ada County has good mutual aid agreements with the BLM. There is a study regarding wildfire in the Orchard/Mayfield area that needs to be incorporated into document.

Next Meeting: July 13 (Tues) @ 1:30 in same room unless Doug Hardman cannot reserve

#### **2.2.3.2 July 13, 2004**

##### Meeting Kick-off

Synopsis of Wildland Fire Mitigation Planning by John McGee and Ken Homik from NMI.

- What is it, what is the history behind these planning efforts
- Where have we been and where are we going- continued review of community assessments, development of resources and capabilities, stepping stone for funding sources.

Update on public participation, including mailing of surveys and press releases regarding the plans.

Resources and Capabilities: Surveys are trickling in, continued emphasis on getting surveys returned and the importance of identifying “holes” in capabilities for funding opportunities.

Review of Infrastructure, protection, and WUI maps.

- Include Chevron and NW pipeline gas lines
- Include repeater sites
- Identify station locations.
- Map LPG plant in Star, although outside of Ada County
  - Contact Eric Wing, GIS-Mapping coordinator for digital data. 384-3936

- WUI Map- There is a pre-existing "Official Zoning Map" for Ada County. (For info, Ada County Development Services, 464-2277. [www.adaweb.net](http://www.adaweb.net). Look for county codes link.
- WUI maps- need to make legend explanation more clear as to what is actually depicted in the concentric circles. This needs to be even more clear so as any member of the public could read and understand exactly what is portrayed.

Repeaters- back-up power supply for repeaters should be identified as a need.

Communications will continue to be issue- discussed in depth at last meeting.

Discussion of July 12<sup>th</sup> fire in Boise foothills. It was started by workman grinding on a metal fence. Mutual aids worked incredible well, testament to work all departments have been putting forth in training for such incidents. Fire contained at 80 acres, although the potential was much greater.

Discussion involving police and sheriff into the planning effort, since they are frequently utilized for road closure and traffic control.

Review of time line for Fire Plan- Next committee meeting to be scheduled by McGee. The meeting will be prior to one of the three public meetings, which are scheduled for August 10, 11 and 12, in Eagle, Meridian and Boise. Exact times and locations are to be determined.

#### **Other information:**

Foothills Environmental Learning Center, located in Hulls Gulch of the Boise Foothills, will offer an educational center sponsored by BLM, The Nature Conservancy, Boise Cascade, Idaho Power and others. It will serve as an educational opportunity for fire-related issues

BLM does literature drop in cooperation with Boise City fire in foothills area on defensible space issues.

Resources and Capabilities: Have information for nearly all districts. Doug Hardman from Boise City has forwarded updated list of contacts from Ada Co. Wildfire Response Plan.

KH spent time with Holly LeFevre from BLM discussing treatments in Ada, Canyon and Owyhee Counties. She is on a short detail and is not sure of all treatments that are scheduled in the counties. She will get with the fuels person from the district to gather pertinent information.

KH visited areas within Ada County that were identified by Idaho Fish and Game, Boise River Management Area that were not specifically addressed in the plan. Since Fish and Game manages a large chunk of the foothills, their concerns should be addressed. These will be integrated during the community assessments update.

Access throughout the county is an issue and should be brought highlighted as a recommendation for Z&P changes.

#### **2.2.3.3 March 30 2005**

##### **Ada County WUI-WMP Committee Meeting March 30, 2005 Committee Review Meeting**

Attendees: Tera Duman, NMI  
Toby Brown, NMI  
Doyle McPherson, Kuna Fire  
Anne Kawalec, Ada County Assessor-GIS  
Irene Saphra, BLM

Carrie Bilbao, Boise District-BLM  
Bill Moore, RC&D  
Mike Winkle, Eagle Fire Department  
Doug Hardman, Ada City-County Emergency Management  
Ray Carino, ACCEM  
Chris Head, Star Fire District

Toby Brown began the formal meeting by giving everyone an update on the status of the project and a quick review of the planning process from this point to completion. Introductions were made around the table. This meeting was intended to present the DRAFT Wildfire Mitigation Plan to the planning committee and discuss the details of the plan. The following are comments and corrections offered by members of the committee:

- Carrie Bilbao has more names and corrections from the BLM for the fire ignition database
- Ada County does not have any “rural” fire districts, refer to them as “local” or just “districts”
- BLM database does not include information from the State Fire Marshall – ask if they can provide this information in the same way they did for Payette County
- # of acres burned throughout the county is decreasing; however, the damage caused is increasing due to large homes in the WUI
- More accurate population statistics are available from the community planning association
- Use # classification on FRCC maps instead of departure classification
- All primary access route thoroughfares should be included in WUI
- There is a new subdivision going in along Hwy 55 to County line (8-10,000 structures)
- The county is seeing a 25% increase in parcels
- Delete obsolete cities from maps (i.e. Olson City, Barber, Ustick, etc.)
- Section 3.9.3 change southeast to south
- BLM partners with the community on some projects. We need to get list of proposed projects
- Missing I-84 corridor project from all discussions (see Elmore County)
- 4.4.3.8 Mitigation Action: change Orchard to Pleasant Valley-Owyhee
- BLM Resources and Capabilities – change to Boise District
- 4.6.2.3 needs period
- Kuna Station #2 – address is 10600
- Melba Fire Resources and Capabilities are listed twice and Star Fire is missing
- 4.7.2 Ada County has major addressing problems, they need to re-address the entire county
- Change Emergency Services to Emergency Management

- Most fire districts need mobile repeaters, wildfire PPEs, and staffing for existing equipment
- Annual Prioritization – Wildfire Steering Committee is probably responsible for making recommendations for the County
- Fix Table lettering
- 5.1.d – Add BLM
- Add volunteer dispatch personnel to needs list
- 5.2.a – Wildfire Steering Committee should continue . . .; Responsible organization should say RC&D, Emergency Management, City, dispatch, federal agencies, and fire districts
- 5.4.k – Add dispatch, BLM, and Wildfire Steering Committee
- 5.2.c – Home site evaluations are really hard. They have been tried by the RC&D. Boise Front area might not be worth it, possibly just do education campaign in this area
- Add mobile support unit with extra supplies for rural districts
- Acquire GIS mobile units for onsite mapping, etc.
- 5.3.f – Add Wildfire Steering Committee and Dispatch
- Add new Star Station on Hwy 16, helipad, and development of accessible water resources for Star District

#### **2.2.3.4 May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

Ada County Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee review meeting. Meridian Fire Station.

The committee met to discuss comments additions and updates to the fire plan. There were a limited number of comments and additions.

The county is beginning on its All Hazard Mitigation Plan. The wildfire mitigation Plan will become one chapter in the AHMP making it eligible for a wider range of federal funding. The overall AHMP process is similar to the Wildfire Planning process. The committee will have a wider base including more municipalities' public works, health, and county and city disaster preparedness coordinators.

It was discussed that this planning process dovetail into the AHMP process and that the draft copies of both plans go out together for one joint Public Review period in October or November when the AHMP is ready for Public review.

There were only a few committee members present at this meeting, but it was felt that delaying the public draft of this wildfire mitigation plan and incorporating the release with the AHMP was the best option.

#### **2.2.3.5 August 25, 2005**

Ada County Wildfire Mitigation Plan Update Meeting

Attendees: Shawn Rayne Ada County Emergency Medical Services

Kurt Houston, IDL

Paul Woods, Ada County Foothills & Open Space Manager

Bruce Rankin, Boise City Fire

Bob Narus, BLM  
Doug Hardman, Ada County Emergency Services  
David Monson, Ada County Sheriff  
Toby Brown, Northwest Management, Inc.  
Tera King, Northwest Management, Inc.

A meeting of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan committee was called to discuss the current status of the Fire Plan. At the last meeting it was decided that instead of going through the entire approval process for the stand alone Fire Plan, the committee would wait and roll it in with the Ada County All Hazard Mitigation Plan. This would allow the committee to send them both on to FEMA at the same time and go through only one formal adoption process for both plans. This and other funding issues was explained in great detail in order to make sure the entire committee understood what was delaying the completion of the plan and why it was beneficial to take this action.

## **2.2.4 Public Meetings**

Public meetings were held during the planning process, as an integral component to the planning process. It was the desire of the planning committee, and the Ada County Commissioners to integrate the public's input to the development of the fire mitigation plan.

Formal public meetings were scheduled on September 7, 2004, at Eagle, Idaho, September 8, 2004, at Meridian, and on September 9, 2004, at Boise, Idaho. Due to low turnout at these meetings, two more meetings were scheduled and held at Star Senior Center on October 29 and at Meridian Senior Center on November 4. The purpose of these meetings was to share information on the planning process with a broadly representative cross section of Ada County landowners. Both meetings had wall maps posted in the meeting rooms with many of the analysis results summarized specifically for the risk assessments, location of structures, fire protection, and related information. The formal portion of the presentations included a PowerPoint presentation made by Project Leader, Toby R. Brown. During his presentations, comments from committee members, fire chiefs, and others were encouraged in an effort to engage the audience in a discussion.

It was made clear to all in attendance that their input was welcome and encouraged, as specific treatments had not yet been decided, nor had the risk assessment been completed. Attendees were told that they could provide oral comment during these meetings, they could provide written comment to the meetings, or they could request more information in person to discuss the plan. In addition, attendees were told they would have an opportunity to review the draft plan prior to its completion to further facilitate their comments and input.

The formal presentations lasted approximately 1 hour and included many questions and comments from the audience. Following the meetings, many discussions continued with the committee members and the general public discussing specific areas, potential treatments, the risk analysis, and other topics.

### **2.2.4.1 Meeting Notices**

Public notices of this meeting were printed in the **Idaho Statesman** and the **Idaho Press** the week of August 27, 2004. Public service announcements also ran on KBOI, KTIK, KZMG, KKGL, KQFC, and KIZN.

## **Hot Topic: Ada & Canyon Counties Plan to Mitigate Wildfire Risk**


The Ada & Canyon County Commissioners, working with the Southwest Idaho RC&D, have created a Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee to complete a Wildfire Mitigation Plan for Ada & Canyon Counties as part of the National Fire Plan authorized by Congress and the White House. The Ada & Canyon Counties Wildfire Mitigation Plans will include risk analysis at the community level with predictive models for where fires are likely to ignite and where they are likely to spread rapidly once ignited. Northwest Management, Inc. has been retained by Ada & Canyon Counties to provide wildfire risk assessments, mapping, field inspections, and interviews, and to collaborate with the committee to prepare the plan. The committee includes rural and wildland fire districts, land managers, elected officials, agency representatives, and others. Northwest Management specialists are conducting analyses of fire prone landscapes and making recommendations for potential treatments. Specific activities for homes, structures, infrastructure, and resource capabilities will be proposed as part of the analysis.

One of the most important steps in gathering information about fire risk in Ada & Canyon Counties is to conduct a homeowner's survey. Northwest Management, Inc., in cooperation with local fire officials, have mailed a brief survey to randomly selected homeowners in the county seeking details about home construction materials, proximity to water sources, and other risk factors surrounding homes. This survey is very important to the success of the plan. Those homes that receive a survey are asked to please take the time to complete it, thereby benefiting the community overall.


The planning team will be conducting Public Meetings to discuss preliminary findings and to seek public involvement in the planning process in September. For more information on the Fire Mitigation Plan projects in Ada & Canyon Counties contact your County Commissioners, the Southwest Idaho RC&D office, John McGee, the Ada & Canyon County local coordinator, at 208-459-8404 or William Schlosser at the Northwest Management, Inc. office in Moscow, Idaho at 208-883-4488.

Meeting notices were posted around the county and on Internet web site of the County advertising the meetings. Figure 2.1 is an example of the flyer used in this effort to advertise the public meetings.

Figure 2.1. Advertisement for Ada County Public Meetings.



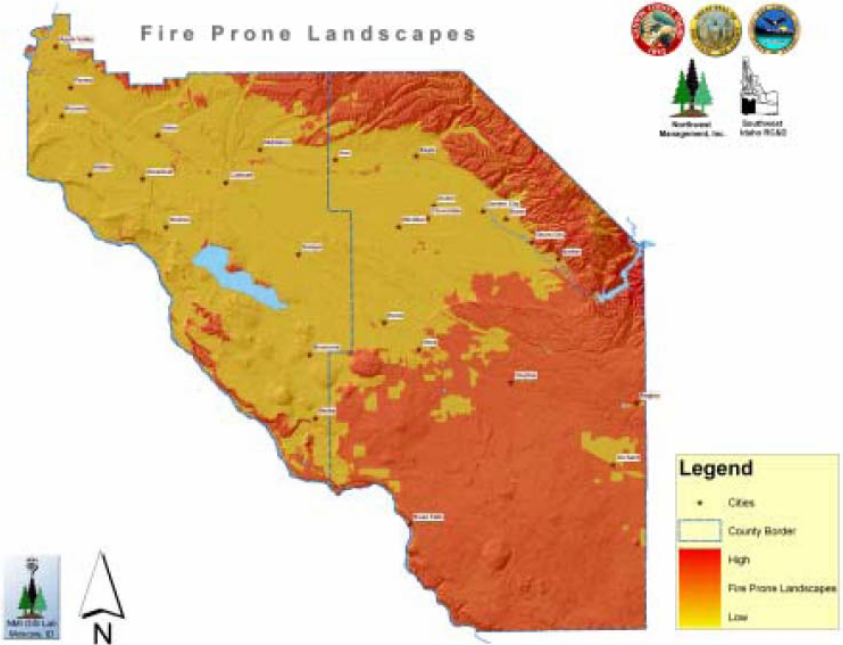
## Ada County, Idaho Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Public Meetings!



Southwest  
Idaho RC&D

- ◆ **Meridian** - Thursday 1:00 PM, November 4, Meridian Senior Center, 133 W. Broadway Ave
- ◆ **Star** - Friday 11:00 AM, November 5 — **free lunch!!**, Star Senior Center, 102 S. Main

Public meetings are scheduled in Meridian and Star, November 4 & 5, to address Wildfire risks around our communities. These meetings are open to the public and will include presentations from wildfire mitigation specialists working on the Ada County Wildfire Mitigation Plan. Public input is being sought in order to better frame the County's efforts of fuels treatments, fire fighting resource enhancements, and public land management.



Fire Prone Landscapes

Legend

- Cities
- County Border
- High
- Fire Prone Landscapes
- Low

Learn about the assessments of risk (Fire Prone Landscapes - above) and the Wildland-Urban Interface of Ada County. Discuss YOUR priorities for how Ada County can best mitigate wildland fire risks around your community. **JOIN US!**

Each meeting will last for approximately 1.5 hours and include refreshments, a slideshow, information on the planning process, and schedules for completion.

For more information on Wildfire Mitigation Plan projects in Ada County, contact your County Commissioners, Bill Moore with the Southwest Idaho RC&D office at 208-888-1890 ext. 4, or Dr. William Schlosser at the Northwest Management, Inc. office in Moscow, Idaho at 208-883-4488.

#### **2.2.4.2 Meridian Public Meeting**

##### **November 4, 2004- Meridian Senior Center- 1 PM**

Meeting attendance included a total of seven individuals. The group discussed a number of issues that had been previously identified by the committee as posing significant challenges for fire suppression in Ada County. The fact that these issues have been identified by both the committee and the public reaffirm the need for these factors to be addressed. Five specific issues were discussed:

- Expansion of fire districts to provide better coverage in eastern portions of the county as well as south toward Kuna.
- Issues associated with smoke from agricultural burning and the impacts within the Boise Airshed.
- The need for additional fire stations and equipment to provide better fire protection county-wide.
- The need to restrict building practices and construction materials within the Boise Foothills in order to reduce flammability of structures.
- The need to widen pre-existing roads in subdivisions in order to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles.

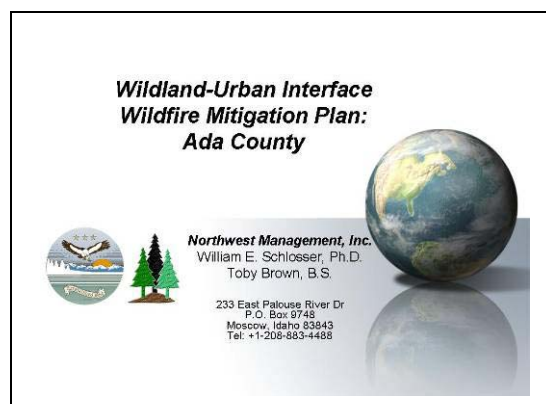
#### **2.2.4.3 Star Public Meeting**

##### **November 5, 2004- Star Senior Center- 12 PM**

This luncheon public meeting included a total of 31 individuals. Issues discussed include the following:

- The need for enforcement of planning and zoning regulations in the Boise Foothills.
- Potential building restrictions for certain high risk areas of the foothills
- Better smoke management for allowed burning in the valley
- Better public notification when roads are closed due to fires (or other hazards)

**Figure 2.2. Public meeting slideshow overview.**



The public meeting slide show (title slide above) is outlined below.



**Table 2.6. Public meeting slide show.**

**Slide 1**

**Wildland-Urban Interface  
Wildfire Mitigation Plan:  
Ada County**



**Northwest Management, Inc.**  
William E. Schlosser, Ph.D.  
Toby Brown, B.S.

233 East Palouse River Dr  
P.O. Box 8748  
Moscow, Idaho 83843  
Tel: +1-208-883-4488



**Slide 2**

**Northwest Management, Inc.**



- Serving the Western U.S. since 1984
- Main Office in Moscow, Idaho
  - Hayden, Idaho
  - Caldwell, Idaho
  - Deer Park, Washington
  - Helena, Montana
- Full Service Natural Resource Consultants
  - Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Planning
  - All Hazards Mitigation Planning

*Providing a balanced approach to natural resource management*

**Slide 3**

**Cooperative Effort: Southwest Idaho  
RC&D, Ada and Canyon Counties**



*To Assess Wildfire Risks and develop a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Strategy to reduce the losses experienced due to wildfire events within the Counties.*


*Two Separate Plans will be completed, one for each county.*






**Slide 4**

**Goals of Today's Meeting**




- Share information on where we are in the planning process
- Facilitate an opportunity for you to provide input to the plan
- Discuss options for wildfire mitigation that meet the real needs for Ada County citizens

**Slide 5**

**FEMA All Hazards Mitigation Plan**



- Wildland Fire
- Flooding
- Earthquakes
- Landslides
- Winter Storm
- Tornadoes/Wind Storms
- Terrorism and Civil Unrest
- Plus others depending on a Hazard Profile



**Each Hazard is one Chapter of the AHMP**  
*Required by November 1, 2004 for all counties*

**Slide 6**

**FEMA Requirements  
(Outstanding Rating)**



- Adoption by Local Government Body
- Multi-Jurisdictional Planning
- Identification of Hazards & Risk Assessment
  - Profiling Hazard Events
  - Mapping Juxtaposition of Hazards, Structures, Infrastructure
  - Potential Dollar Losses to Vulnerable Structures (B/C Analysis)
- Documented Planning Process
- Assessing Vulnerability
- Mitigation Goals
- Analysis of Mitigation Measures
- Monitoring, Evaluating & Updating the Plan (5 year cycles)
- Implementation Through Existing Programs
- Public Involvement

**Slide 7**

**Wildfire Mitigation: National Policy**



- **National Fire Plan (2000)**
  - Preparedness
  - Rehabilitation & Restoration
  - Hazardous Fuel Reduction
  - Community Protection
  - Accountability
- **Statewide Implementation Strategy**
  - Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services
  - Idaho Implementation Strategy of the National Fire Plan

**Slide 8**

**Healthy Forests Restoration Act (2003)**



- Strengthens public participation in developing high priority projects;
- Reduces the complexity of environmental analysis allowing federal land agencies to use the best science available to actively manage land under their protection;
- Creates a pre-decisional objections process encouraging early public participation in project planning; and
- Issues clear guidance for court action challenging HFRA projects.

**Table 2.6. Public meeting slide show.**

Slide 9

**Wildfire Mitigation:  
Funding Opportunities**



- **Federal Monies**
  - National Fire Plan
  - Healthy Forests Restoration Act
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency
- **State Monies**
  - Statewide Implementation Efforts
  - Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
- **The Goal is Hazard Reduction (eg., FireWise)**
  - Protection of People and Structures
  - Protection of Infrastructure
  - Protection of Economy
  - Protection of Ecosystems

Slide 10

**Hazard Mitigation:  
Strategy for Planning**



- **Define Policies and Parameters to include:**
  - National Fire Plan
  - Statewide Implementation Strategy
  - Healthy Forests Restoration Act
  - Federal Emergency Management Act
  - The Counties' Goals, Vision, Objectives
- **Description of Ada County**
- **Assessment of Each Factor of Risk**
- **Develop Mitigation Strategies to Reduce the Risk or Mitigate the Loss**

Slide 11

**Recommendations**



- WUI Safety & Policy
  - People & Structures
  - Infrastructure
  - Resources & Capabilities
  - Regional Land Management Recommendations
- We will come back to this list at the end of the presentation...*

Slide 12



Slide 13

**Treatments we are Considering**



- Homeowner and landowner education
- Building code changes for structures in the WUI
- Home site defensible zone through fuels modification
- Community defensible zone fuels alteration
- Access improvements
- Access creation
- Emergency response enhancements (training, equipment, locating new fire stations, new fire districts)
- Regional land management recommendations into the future

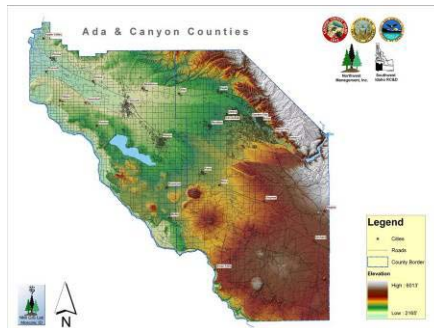
Slide 14

**Hazard Mitigation:  
Treatment Categories**

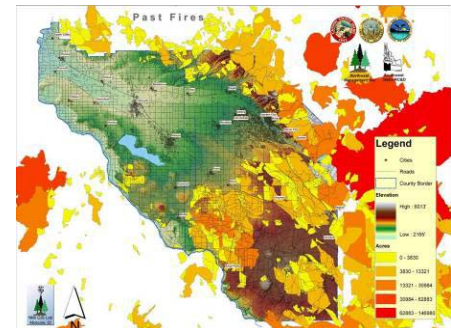


- **People and Structures**
  - Policy at the County Level
  - Reducing Risk to People and Structures
  - Planning and Zoning Changes
- **Infrastructure Protection**
  - Power Lines
  - Roads & Bridges
  - Gas and Water Lines
  - Watersheds
- **Resources and Capabilities**
  - Emergency Services Ability to Respond
- **Federal, State, and Local Land Management Recommendations**

Slide 15

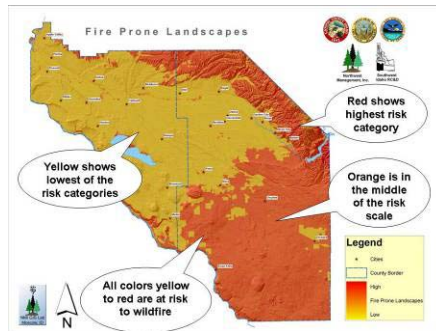


Slide 16



**Table 2.6. Public meeting slide show.**

Slide 17



Slide 18

### Wildland-Urban Interface

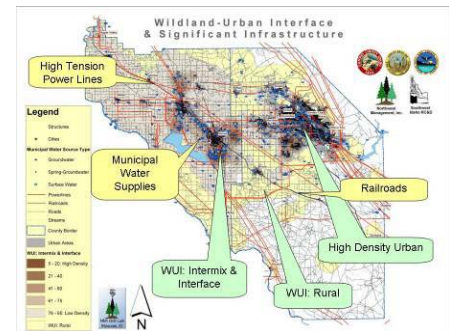
- **Interface Condition** – a situation where structures abut wildland fuels. There is a clear line of demarcation between the structures and the wildland fuels along roads or back fences. The development density for an interface condition is usually 3+ structures per acre;
- **Intermix Condition** – a situation where structures are scattered throughout a wildland area. There is no clear line of demarcation, the wildland fuels are continuous outside of and within the developed area. The development density in the intermix ranges from structures very close together to one structure per 40 acres;
- **Occluded Condition** – a situation, normally within a city, where structures abut an island of wildland fuels (park or open space). There is a clear line of demarcation between the structures and the wildland fuels along roads and fences. The development density for an occluded condition is usually similar to that found in the interface condition and the occluded area is usually less than 1,000 acres in size; and
- **Rural Condition** – a situation where the scattered small clusters of structures (ranches, farms, resorts, or summer cabins) are exposed to wildland fuels. There may be miles between these clusters.

Slide 19

### Defining Ada County's Wildland-Urban Interface

- Unique to each area & it changes over time
- Based on where structures are currently located
- Uses mathematical formulae and geospatial relationships to visually represent where the WUI exists
- *When you see it, you'll understand what we mean*

Slide 20



Slide 21



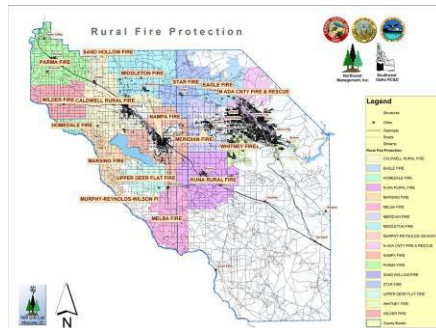
Slide 22

### Preparedness

- City Fire Protection
- Rural Fire Protection
- Wildland Fire Protection



Slide 23



Slide 24

### Public Involvement

- Public Mail Surveys were sent to approximately 230 households in Ada County, 30% response rate so far.
- Public Meetings
  - 3 Ada County communities during September
  - 2 Ada County communities during November
- Public input is sought at all stages of the planning process
- Public Review of the DRAFT Plans will be facilitated once all sections have been completed and reviewed by the committee



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**Table 2.6. Public meeting slide show.**

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Slide 25

**Recommendations**

- WUI Safety & Policy
  - People & Structures
  - Infrastructure
  - Resources & Capabilities
  - Regional Land Management Recommendations
- *We are back to this list!*  
*Are we accomplishing our goals?*  
*What can we do better?*



Slide 26



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## **2.3 Review of the WUI Wildfire Mitigation Plan**

Review of sections of this document was conducted by the planning committee during the planning process as maps, summaries, and written assessments were completed. These individuals included fire mitigation specialists, firefighters, planners, elected officials, and others involved in the coordination process. Preliminary findings were discussed at the public meetings, where comments were collected and facilitated.

The planning process was temporarily delayed because of the poor attendance during the first round of public meetings. A second round of public meetings was held in early 2005, where better attendance was witnessed. A DRAFT for Committee Review was delivered on March 30, 2005. The Committee review process remained open until April 19, 2005. With the beginning of the Ada County All Hazard Mitigation Plan process in August, this Wildfire Mitigation Plan has been wrapped into the public review period for the entire All Hazard Mitigation Plan, of which this plan is one chapter.

## **2.4 Continued Public Involvement**

Ada County is dedicated to involving the public directly in review and updates of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Ada County Commissioners, through the Interface Hazard Mitigation Committee are responsible for the annual review and update of the plan as recommended in the "Recommendations" section of this document.

The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback about the Plan annually on the anniversary of the adoption of this plan, at the meeting of the County Commissioners. Copies of the Plan will be catalogued and kept at all of the appropriate agencies in the county. The existence and location of these copies will be publicized. Instructions on how to obtain copies of the plan will be made available on the County's Internet web site. The Plan also includes the address and phone number of the Ada County Planning Division, responsible for keeping track of public comments on the Plan.

In addition, copies of the plan and any proposed changes will be posted on the county website. This site will also contain an email address and phone number to which people can direct their comments and concerns.

A public meeting will also be held as part of each annual evaluation or when deemed necessary by the Interface Hazard Mitigation Committee. The meetings will provide the public a forum for which they can express its concerns, opinions, or ideas about the Plan. The County Public

Information Officer will be responsible for using county resources to publicize the annual public meetings and maintain public involvement through the public access channel, webpage, and newspapers.